

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1404

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJECT: LOCAL REACTION TO NEW POLITICAL MOVEMENT (EPOK)

REF: A) THESSALONIKI 0202 : B) ATHENS 1992

1. THESSALONIKI WEEKEND PRESS CARRIED FURTHER FRONTPAGE REPORTS AND FIRST EDITORIAL COMMENT ON FOUNDING OF " GREEK CULTURAL MOVEMENT" (EPOK). OPPOSITION " MAKEDONIA" AND " THESSALONIKI" BOTH SCEPTICAL AND GENERALLY COOL TO NEW ORGANIZATION. ACCORDING TO " MAKEDONIA" HEADLINES OF APRIL 7, " ATTEMPT TO FOUND POLITICAL MOVEMENT IS FAILING" AND " LACKS SERIOUS APPEAL". REPORT FROM ATHENS CORRESPONDENT IN SAME ISSUE STATES THAT INAUGULAR EPOK CONGRESS, SCHEDULED TO BE HELD HERE APRIL 15, NOW CANCELLED OWING TO " RELUCTANCE OF SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL, AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERS OF THESSALONIKI TO JOIN MOVEMENT DESPITE EFFORTS BY SUPPORTERS IN MACEDONIA". AS RESULT, FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE WILL BE HELD IN ATHENS AT TIME OF APRIL 21 ANNIVERSARY.

2. CONSERVATIVE " ELLINIKOS VORRAS", ON OTHER HAND, TAKES POSITIVE BUT SOMEWHAT GUARDED VIEW OF EPOK AND CLAIMS CREDIT FOR BEING FIRST PAPER TO ANNOUNCE FOUNDING OF NEW ORGANIZATION. ISSUES OF APRIL 7 AND 8 DOMINATED BY REPORTS, LARGELY FROM ATHENS, ON NEW " OFFICIAL PARTY OF REVOLUTION" (EPISSIMON KOMA TIS EPANASTASEOS). ACCORDING TO PEAD- IN COMMENTS IN UNCLASSIFIED

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FRONTPAGE ARTICLE OF APRIL 8, MAJOR NATIONAL POLICIES OF ELEFTHERIOS VENIZELOS CONSTITUTE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF EPOK AND NEW MOVEMENT WILL BE DEVOTED TO POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF GREECE. IN "VORRAS" ACCOUNT, POSTPONEMENT OF APRIL 15 MEETING IN THESSALONIKI DUE TO NEED FOR NATIONAL FORUM IN ATHENS RATHER THAN LACK OF LOCAL ENTHUSIASM. FIRST EPOK CONGRESS HERE NOW SCHEDULED FOR EARLY MAY. ORGANIZATION WILL INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL CLASSES, GROUPS, AND PARTIES IN GREECE WHO HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN INVOLVED IN POLITICS BUT WHO RECOGNIZE THAT "GREECE WILL SOON ENTER NORMAL POLITICAL LIFE".

3. "VORRAS" REPORT STATES THAT IN ADDITION TO PROFESSOR LOUKAS PATRAS OF THESSALONIKI LAW SCHOOL, LOCAL EPOK BRANCH WILL BE HEADED BY PROFESSOR STYLIANOS KARAKANTAS OF HIGHER INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, PROFESSOR ANTHIMOS CHRYSTOFORIDES DIRECTOR OF THEOGENION CANCER INSTITUTE, PRESIDENT OF THESSALONIKI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL SPYROS GUGLIEMOS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF THESSALONIKI MEDICAL SCHOOL SOTERIOS FALTSIS, CIVIL ENGINEER GEORGE KATOPI, AND PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF SMALL INDUSTRIES DEMETRIOS LANARAS, BASIC CADRE OF 100 MEMBERS NOW BEGINNING CAMPAIGN TO RECRUIT NEW SUPPORTERS, PARTICULARLY AMONG YOUNGER PROFESSIONAL GROUPS.

4. WHILE ELIAS KYROU, ONLY REGULAR EDITORIAL WRITER HERE, HAS SO FAR REFRAINED FROM COMMENT ON EPOK, UNSIGNED WEEKLY REVIEW COLUMN OF "VORRAS" LABELS ORGANIZATION AS "FIRST STEPS TOWARD POLITICS".
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